

THE VOICE

MERROW METHODIST CHURCH MAGAZINE



September 2020

MESSAGE FROM THE MANSE – SEPTEMBER 2020

Dear friends,

Greetings in Christ the Lord!

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me? Psalm 13:1

The cry of Psalm 13 is, “How long?” And that is the question on everyone’s mind these days, too. How long will this pandemic last? How long till there is a vaccine? How long will I be cut off from friends and family? How long can we stand it? Most things are bearable if you know how long you will have to endure them. A bad headache, it will wear out in a few hours. A bad cold, it will run its course in a few days. But this pandemic due to a novel corona virus! How long till we can sing in church again? We do not know. And that is the hardest thing of all - the not knowing.

And yet, there are many things we don’t know. In fact we don’t know most things. Millions of stars and planets in the Milky Way alone, we don’t know what life might look like out there among the stars. We don’t know what wondrous creatures or miracle cures lay hidden deep in the earth’s rainforests. But more than that we don’t know what tomorrow holds for any of us. Even the most predictable life is prone to surprises. But we manage to live without that knowledge, and most of us are doing all right. Despite the great unknowing, we make the coffee, read the paper, and tell jokes, laugh, and sleep, find things to enjoy.

Knowledge is a beautiful thing, but not knowing is part of the human condition, too. Can we cherish the things we know and entrust the rest to God’s care? Can we find ways to enjoy this time despite our worries about the economy, our investments, our loneliness, social distancing, wearing masks and all the other discontents of this day or time? Can we live this day with courage and with strength without knowing when or how a new day will dawn upon us? This is the day that has been appointed to us. Not only must we meet its challenges with grace, but we must manage to live our lives in it, to enjoy it the best we can, and to participate in Christ’s mission to the world, which is the business of Christians in every age. The needs of the world do not go away. There are things we can do without knowing when this will end. We can love each other. We can speak out for the just treatment of the vulnerable.

We can be the salt of the earth and the light of the world that Jesus named us in his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:13-16).

How long, O LORD? We don't know. But let us live this day with courage and with hope, and like people who have been given a job to do. That we all keep our candles of hope lit, resulting in our growing deeper in our faith and love for the neighbour, and this then eventually leading to peace in the world.

In Christ the Prince of Peace,

Asif

*and a further note from Asif
regarding his pre-recorded services*

By now you may well know that our Church is provisionally opening for 'Silent Prayer' from mid-September and for worship, after many months of Covid-19 restrictions, on Sunday 18th October. Though Churches are allowed to open there are certain restrictions in place both for worshippers and preachers.

One of the tests the preachers have to go through in order to go into a Church to conduct worship is filling out a Personal Risk Assessment Form and must score less than 6. This assessment is based on a person's age, gender, and ethnicity and health conditions.

Unfortunately I have scored 6. I was eagerly looking forward to seeing you all in Church on a Sunday morning and now I am hugely disappointed for not being able to be present in person at the Church services and only my pre-recorded message will be shown on the screens. So, for the time being, I will patiently wait and pray that the Lord makes that day arrive soon when I'll see you in person. Till then God bless.

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PRAYER SUPPORT GROUP

This is a small group willing to put time aside for praying each day for special needs within the Church community.

The prayer contact for SEPTEMBER will be

PAULINE DANIELS

01483 578315

Your request will be passed on to other members of the group, where it will remain confidential.

Editorial note

Here I sit at my computer
Editing "The Voice".
My first task – September's issue.
Am I spoilt for choice?
No one knew I'd taken over,
So it seems I'm not 'In clover'.

On the cover, just as usual,
Picture of the church.
If no items come this week, you'll
Leave me in the lurch!
Empty pages still need filling
What can you send in that's thrilling?

Poems, photos, reminiscence,
Let me hear your voice.
Inundate by post or email.
Make me 'spoilt for choice'.
Anyone who'd care to aid me
Please, oh please, do not afraid be!

Due to the current situation, we are not printing a hard copy of "The Voice". Instead we are featuring it on our website, sending out email copies with the News-sheet and posting out "email copies" to all those who do not have internet access.

Don't forget that 'The Voice' is YOUR voice.
What would YOU like to say?
Where have you walked?
Who have you met up with?
What have you read or watched?
Who? What? Which? How? When? please share it

The **OCTOBER 2020** issue of "The Voice" will, hopefully, be available online, from **TUESDAY SEPT. 29th 2020**.

Any items for inclusion should be sent to me by

TUESDAY SEPT 22nd 2020

via email: gillianbrierley13@gmail.com;

or

by post: 57, Darfield Rd. GU4 7YY

TIME OUT

Four of our members who experienced 'Time Out' last year had booked to go again this year, but the pandemic has meant that we are to be disappointed. However, GOOD NEWS:

Dave Pope of The Flame Trust has sent this letter

Dear Friends,

I'm delighted that for our SPECIAL 20th ANNIVERSARY TIME OUT FAMILY CONFERENCE we are returning to Paignton.

The Coronavirus pandemic has unfortunately meant that we have had to delay the conference from its usual October date, but are pleased that The Redcliffe Hotel has been able to accommodate us on the revised dates of Sunday 28 February to Thursday 4 March 2021.

The Redcliffe remains extremely popular with our guests, situated as it is on the beach, and continues to receive wonderful reviews, providing an excellent location for TIME OUT.

As ever, the event will provide an ideal opportunity for a relaxing and inspiring break, and for this 20th Anniversary occasion we are delighted to be able to welcome back Rev David Coffey, former Baptist Union President and well-loved speaker, supported with other guests.

The week will of course include other Time Out activities and time to reflect on the past 20 years of Time Out and the work of Flame Trust.

There will be a limited number of sea view rooms at a supplement, and these will be allocated strictly on a first come, first served basis.

Although we have always refreshed the event over the past 20 years, what will not change is the warm welcome extended to you, your family and friends - do encourage them to join us if they haven't experienced a TIME OUT week before. It will include planned activities and meetings, and will feature the current ministries of Flame Trust.

There will also be plenty of time to relax, or to explore the coastal areas, and enjoy the amenities of Paignton.

Look forward to seeing you in Paignton ...

God bless.

Dave Pope

SO

Join us for the

20th ANNIVERSARY FLAME TRUST FAMILY CONFERENCE

Sunday 28 February -Thursday 4 March 2021

at

The Redcliffe Hotel, Paignton, Devon TQ3 2NL



With Dave Pope
Guest Speaker Rev David Coffey
Musical Director Ian Watson
and Special Guests

(PRICES HELD FROM 2019)

TARIFF: Standard room: £420.00 p/p half board

Sea view room (double/twin only): £8.00 pppn

Single room supplement: £15.00 per night

Additional days: £60.00 p/p half board

Further details & booking forms from Gillian Brierley or Derek Varley

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SEPTEMBER

Midweek Prayer – The Church will provisionally reopen for 'Silent Prayer' on Wednesday 16th September from 10.00am -11.00am for an initial four week trial period.

Bible Study Group – 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month
Although we have been unable to meet since March, bible studies have been sent out by email or post to the members of the group. If you too would like to receive these please contact Gillian Brierley

Mission in the community:

- No.5
- Mulberry House
- Matrix Trust mobile coffee bar (see news-sheet)

and in

OCTOBER

It is proposed, Covid 19 permitting, to re-open our church for Sunday worship on 18th October at 10.30am - preacher : Rosemary Lee.

This will be the only service in October but there are already services planned for November watch this space.....

There are also 2 district Events you may be interested in attending:

- Racial Justice Symposium: Sat. 3rd October 2020, 10am-12.
- Unconscious Bias Training: Wed. 16th September 2020, 7-9pm

For details see www.learningnetsi.org.uk/events or Eventbrite bookings.

and now
what should have happened in

AUGUST

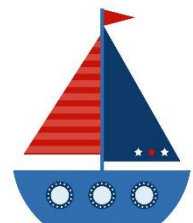
Holiday at Home 2020

We were very disappointed to cancel Holiday at Home this year. Our previous guests were looking forward to meeting again and the programme was well on the way to being finalised. Sadly, even before we started to think about a risk assessment, it was apparent it would not be feasible.

Aware that many of our potential guests have had less contact with the outside world than usual, we decided that we would make contact by sending a card and by telephone around the time when we had hoped to be meeting. We have been pleased to hear of the activities that some of our guests have been able to take part in or have planned but nevertheless acknowledge that for many this has been a very difficult time which has been approached with great fortitude. Please do continue to pray for all, whatever their age, who have been adversely affected by Covid-19.

We very much hope that we will be able to run Holiday at Home on a boating theme in August next year.

Joan W, Ruth, Maggie, Joan T, Robert and Helen



IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR IN THE GARDEN!

September is the beginning of Autumn, Keats' season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, and it certainly has been a good year for fruit of all sorts.



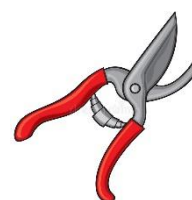
My step-over apple trees have had good crops this year, confirming my theory that apple trees do well every other year. We also had good crops of currants (black and red) and gooseberries. Since harvesting them I have pruned much of the old wood out of the blackcurrant bushes, the red currants can wait a bit longer. I have also noticed, when out walking, that it seems to be a bumper year for blackberries.

The flower borders are still full of bloom and we need to keep this going as long as possible, by regular dead heading and a feed where necessary. The dahlias are really going strong now after a slow start because of the earlier dry weather. I've had some surprises in the dahlia bed owing to loss of labels among the stored tubers last winter, must label them while they are still in bloom to make sure I keep the good ones.

The roses, too, are producing repeat flushes of bloom and I've treated mine to a mulch of rotted manure. I'm told that if you can't collect up the black spotted leaves, you should bury them deep. Hope it works!

September is the best time to be planting spring flowering bulbs, of all sorts, except for tulips, which should wait until November or December to avoid a fungal disease called Tulip Fire.

The August rain has made the early blooming shrubs put on a tremendous amount of growth this year and I need to prune them back (by about a third is a good rule of thumb) in order to keep them in shape.



September is the best month to lift and divide your spring and early summer flowering perennials, to increase your stock and rejuvenate older clumps. It is also time to bring in any houseplants that have been outside for the summer – make sure you're not bringing in any slugs and snails at the same time!

The lawn has required less mowing this year than any I can remember so I will treat it with a special autumn lawn food – this is designed to encourage root development rather than lush top growth, before the winter.

The potatoes have done quite well this year and I need to get the remainder up this month and into storage. If I don't get them, the slugs will!

The tomatoes are doing well; owing to the covid lockdown in the spring, I wasn't able to get my usual varieties, I was left with just good old Alicante, and they have produced a tremendous crop, sometimes the old favourites turn up trumps!

My runner beans this year, have been an absolute disaster, they were initially caught by a tidal wave of blackfly, which failed to respond to my spraying, and have since produced very little bloom and hence very few beans. I hope yours have all done better and that you are enjoying your produce.

I trust that your gardens are all reflecting Keats' description of the season and not that provided by Flanders and Swan:

"Bleak September's mist and mud
Is enough to chill the blood"

Enjoy your garden!

F W Gardener



Stolen from Ivor Novello

Someday my heart will awake
Someday the morning will break
Church doors will stand open wide
As we inside worship together.

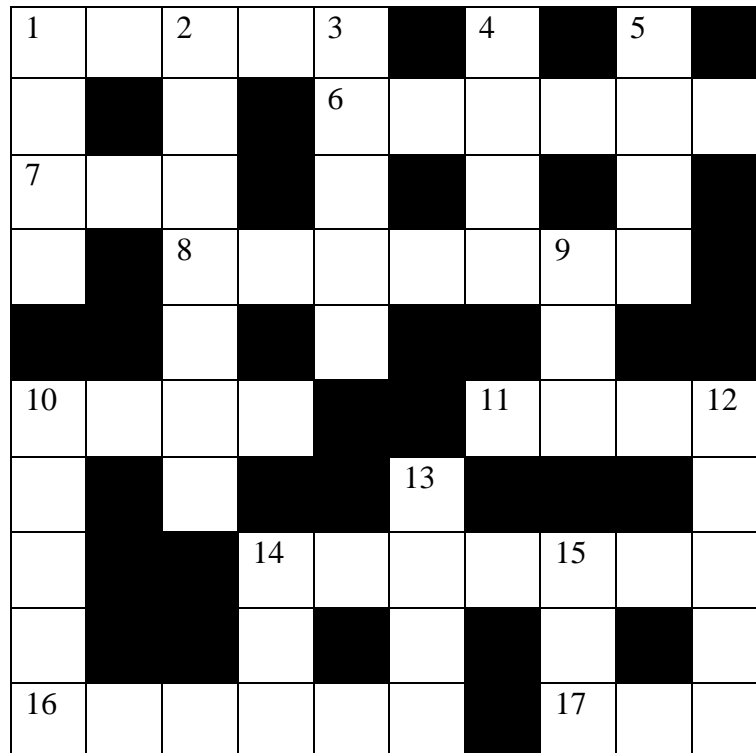
Maybe it won't feel the same.
Covid19 is to blame.
Seats with a two metre space,
Masks on each face, but we're together.

We've all been waiting so long.
Still cannot burst into song!
Yet from our heart's treasure store
Praises will soar, when we're together.



Imagine a carpet,
screens to each side rather than in the centre
and this could almost be
Merrow Methodist Church
On Sunday morning October 18th

JUNIOR CROSSWORD



Clues Across:

1. ----- Peter, one of the disciples (Matt.4:18)
6. The mountain where Noah's ark came to rest (Gen.8:4)
7. His wife looked back as Sodom and Gomorrah burned (Gen.19:26) see 1

Down

8. Ancient tambourine-like instrument (Psalm 150:4 KJV & RSV)
10. How we end a prayer
11. Part of the picnic which fed the 5000 (Matt.14:19)
14. And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent ----- (Exodus 9:23) see also 5 Down
16. He owned a vineyard (1 Kings 21:1)
17. The land where Cain settled, east of Eden (Gen.4:16)

Clues Down:

1. She was turned into a pillar of (Gen. 19:26)
2. Author of the first gospel
3. Mother-in-law of Ruth (Ruth 1:8)
4. Where Samson's strength lay.(Judges 16:17)
5. Precipitation which accompanied the rumbling noise which God also sent (Exodus 9:23). See 14 Across.
9. The priest who cared for Samuel in the temple (1Samuel 3:1)
10. Brother of Moses (Exodus 4:14)
12. King of Judea when Jesus was born (Matt 2:1)
13. Noah's grandson and father of Nimrod (Gen.10:8)
14. How many criminals were crucified with Jesus? (Luke 23: 32-33)
15. The ninth of Jacob's sons (Gen.35:25)

Tiny Frogs

Once upon a time there was a bunch of tiny frogs who arranged a climbing competition. The goal was to reach the top of a very high tower.



And so a big crowd gathered around the tower to see the race and cheer on all the contestants.

The race began, but quite honestly no-one in the crowd really believed that such tiny frogs would reach the top of the tower. They were saying, "It's way too difficult!! They will never make it to the top," and "Not a chance that they'll succeed. The tower is too high."

The tiny frogs began collapsing



one by one



except for those who were a bit stronger.

The crowd continued to yell, "It is too difficult!!! No one will make it!" More tiny frogs got tired and gave up but one continued higher and higher



.....and higher, long after all of the others had given up and dropped back down to the bottom and he, after a big effort, actually made it to the top!

All of the other tiny frogs naturally wanted to know how this one frog managed to do it.

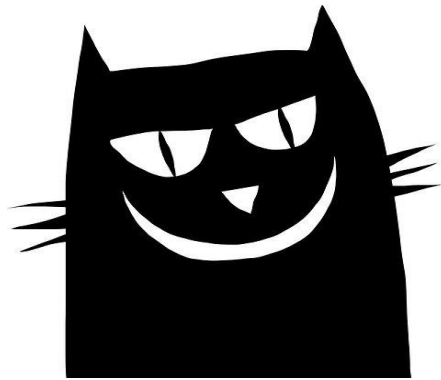
One contestant asked the tiny frog how he had found the strength to succeed and reach his goal, but he didn't hear him.



He shouted the question again but he still didn't hear, so he shouted at the top of his voice, which was really loud for such a tiny frog but he still couldn't hear him.....

..... he was deaf!

How much more could we do if we, like the frog turned a deaf ear to all those who say we can't



A cat story

A cat dies and goes to heaven. God meets him at the gate and says, "You have been a good cat all of these years. Anything you desire is yours, all you have to do is ask."

The cat says, "Well, I lived all my life with a poor family on a farm and had to sleep on hardwood floors."

God says, "Say no more," and instantly a fluffy pillow appears.

A few days later six mice are killed in a tragic accident and they go to Heaven. God meets them at the gate with the same offer he made the cat. The mice say, "All our lives we've had to run. Cats, dogs and even women with brooms have chased us. If we could only have a pair of roller skates we wouldn't have to run anymore."

God says, "Say no more," and instantly, each mouse is fitted with a beautiful pair of tiny roller skates.

About a week later God decides to check and see how the cat is doing. The cat is sound asleep on his new pillow. God gently wakes him and asks, "How are you doing? Are you happy here?"

The cat yawns and stretches and says, "Oh, I've never been happier in my life. And those Meals on Wheels you've been sending over are the best!"

Author unknown

Hugh's views

I would like, on behalf of all the members of our church, to thank Jackie and Julie for the sterling work that they undertake for us with the weekly production of the News sheet and the maintenance of our web site. They bring their many skills to these tasks to ensure that what we read is clear and accurate. The wrong word here or there can make all the difference as the following notices illustrate!

"Ladies don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands."

"The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday."

"Weight Watchers will meet at 7.00pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use the large double doors at the side entrance."

"The Associate Minister unveiled the Church's new campaign slogan last Sunday. "I upped my pledge - Up Yours!" "

"Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on Oct 24th in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days."

(Hugh adds "*I am reliably informed that all these sentences actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced at church services.*")

and just one more
from

Gill's trills

Notice to kitchen staff

"Will ladies please rinse out tea pots,
then stand upside down in the sink.
ON NO ACCOUNT must hot bottoms
be placed on the working surface.

From the historic village of Puddletown (nestling in Dorset's Piddle Valley),
come greetings to you all from Ken and Rosemary Mills;
Not only greetings but also a welcome contribution to "The Voice" from

Ken's Pen

Strange things, now we're living in Dorset;
This lockdown, we've had to enforce it.
We've both put on weight;
To stop is too late;
We're hoping to buy a strong corset.

*Ken goes on to add: 'Rules and regulations are constantly changing,
and none of us knows exactly what the future holds.*

Here is a poem by Alfred Easterbrook, which may be helpful':

His plan for today is all that I ask; With Him I can leave the "tomorrow".
So, by faith I can walk, and with Him I can talk; Just today, with its joy or its
sorrow.
He my pathway has planned, and, led by His hand, through the fire while the
gold He's refining;
Be it trial or test, He knows what is best, so I travel where love's light is shining.

With no plan of my own, but with Him on the throne; and to Him all my
problems confiding
He gives me a song as I journey along, and His "Fullness of joy" is abiding.
Though the path may be steep, and the storm round me sweep, yet my soul He
is constantly feeding;
And my strength He renews and with His power endues, as I walk where my
Master is leading.

Just His will for today, just to watch and to pray; to be still when to me He is
speaking;
Just to kneel at His feet, in that sacred retreat, where His face I am constantly
seeking.
His plan for today, let it bring what it may, be it fullness of joy or deep sorrow.
In His love let me rest, for He knows what is best, so with Him I can leave "the
tomorrow"

Let's not forget our advertisers who are all facing challenging times.

ELECTRICIAN *T WILLIAMS 01483 282154*

BUTCHER *CONISBEE 01483 283391*

OSTEOPATH *ANDREW PETERS 01483 570921*

FRESH FOOD SUPPLIES *PEACOCKS 01483 829768*

OAKWOOD BUSINESS CONSULTANTS *01483 276100*

ROOFING *ABLE ROOFING 01483 283137*

CARPENTRY *NICK HAYWOOD 01483 225323*

DECORATOR *RICHARD LEE 01483 612055*

GARDEN MACHINERY *J&M GARDENS 01483 894855*

COAL MERCHANTS *HILLS QUALITY COALS 01483 252223*

CARPETS *LADYMEAD CARPETS 01483 506616*

FUNERAL DIRECTORS *ALAN GREENWOOD 01483 567845*

SOLICITORS *JENNIFER MARGRAVE 01483 562722*

ELECTRICIAN *WARREN MILTON 01483 458310*

FISH AND CHIPS *SEAFARE 01483 534253*

BTU INSTALLATION *01483 590600*

DANCE GROUP *SURREY SAINTS 07900 902527*

FUNERAL DIRECTORS *LODGE AND MONK 01483 562780*

Prayers worth sharing



Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

From the CofE website

We are not people of fear:
we are people of courage.
We are not people who protect our own safety:
we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.
We are not people of greed:
we are people of generosity.
We are your people God,
giving and loving,
wherever we are,
whatever it costs
For as long as it takes
wherever you call us.

Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference

God our Father, by whose mercy
the world turns safely into darkness and returns again to light:
we place in your hands our unfinished tasks,
our unsolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes,
knowing that only what you bless will prosper.
To your love and protection
we commit each other and all those we love,
knowing that you alone are our sure defender,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Church of South India